

Leading Geeks:

How to Manage and Lead People Who Deliver Technology

Leading Geeks is Different from Leading Other Employees

For 3 Reasons

Reason #1

Geeks are Different from Other
People

Reason #2

Geekwork is Different from
Other Work

Reason # 3

Power is Useless
with Geeks

So What?

“Business has only two
functions -- marketing and
innovation.”

-Peter Drucker

“The most important contribution that management needs to make in the 21st century is ... to increase the productivity of knowledge work and knowledge workers.”

- *Peter Drucker*

Myth #1: Leadership is Universal.
Good Leaders Treat Everyone
Alike.

Truth: If You Want to Lead
Someone, Start Out By
Understanding Them

Geeks are More Loyal to their
Technology than they are to you.

Geeks Revere the Rational

Myth #2: If you know a tree,
you understand a forest.

Truth: Groups are not just a
collection of individuals.

Geeks Ignore Official Hierarchy ... Deliberately

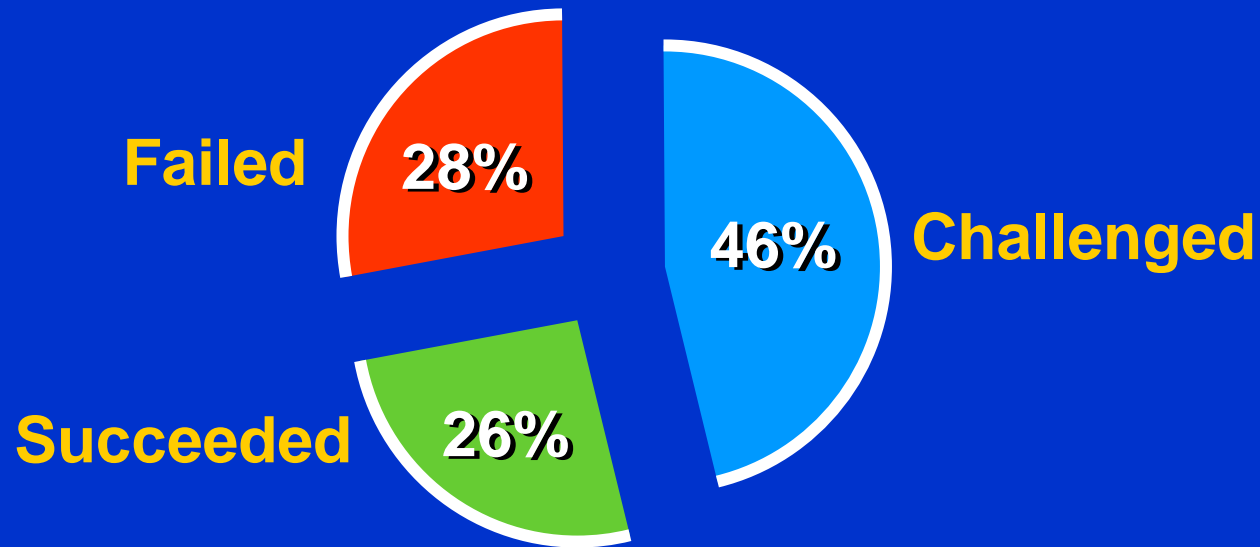
Ambivalence About Groups

Myth #3: Good Leaders Can Lead
Anyone to Do Anything

Truth: What You Would Lead People
to do Affects How You Lead Them

Geekwork is different from other work

Failure is Normal

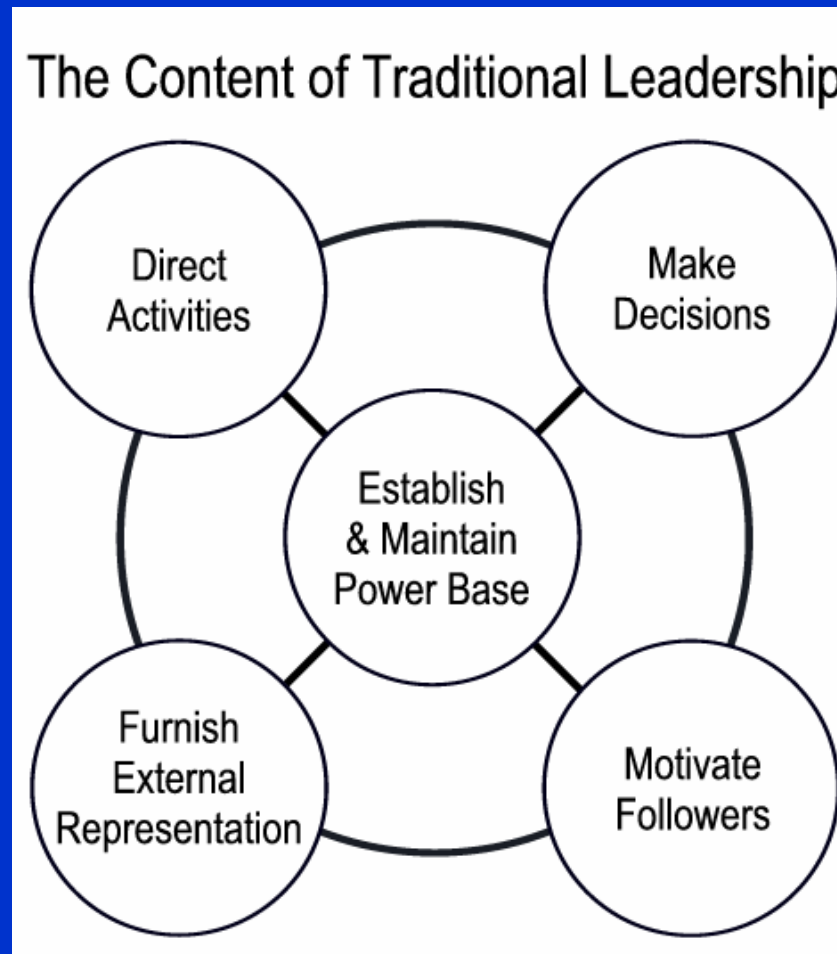


Subordinates Know More Than Managers

Knowledge Inversion Violates
Almost Every Common Assumption
About Management and Leadership

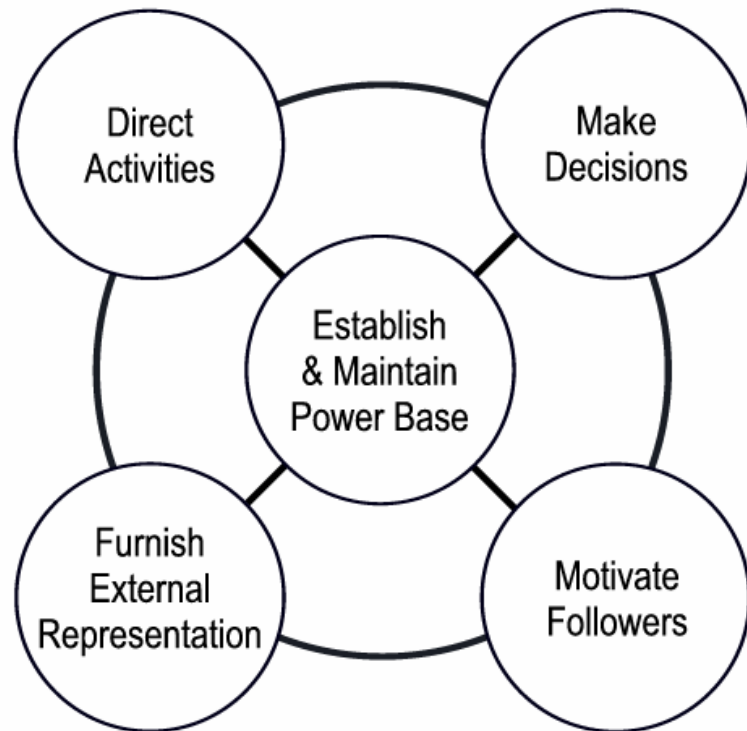
What Does Leadership Mean With Geeks?

Traditional Leadership

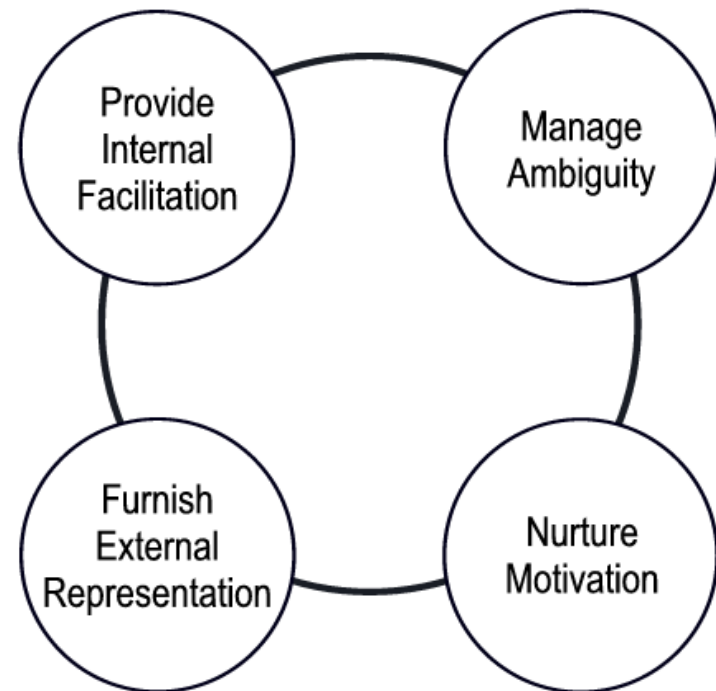


What's So Different About Geek Leadership?

The Content of Traditional Leadership



The Content of Geek Leadership



External Representation

Responsibilities of External Representation

- Acquire Information
- Establish and Maintain Alignment
- Obtain Resources
- Manage Expectations
- Project Prominence
- Protecting Geeks
- Insulating Geeks
- Attracting Geeks

Internal Facilitation

Command vs Facilitation

Facilitation

- Establish and Maintain Work Environment
- Facilitate Tasks

Nurture Motivation

Sources of Motivation

Geek Motivation

Motivating Geeks

- Select Wisely
- Manage Meaning
- Communicate Significance
- Show Career Path
- Projectize
- Encourage Isolation
- Engender External Competition
- Design Interdependence
- Limit Group Size
- Control Resource Availability
- Offer Free Food...Intermittently

De-Motivating Geeks

Typical De-Motivators

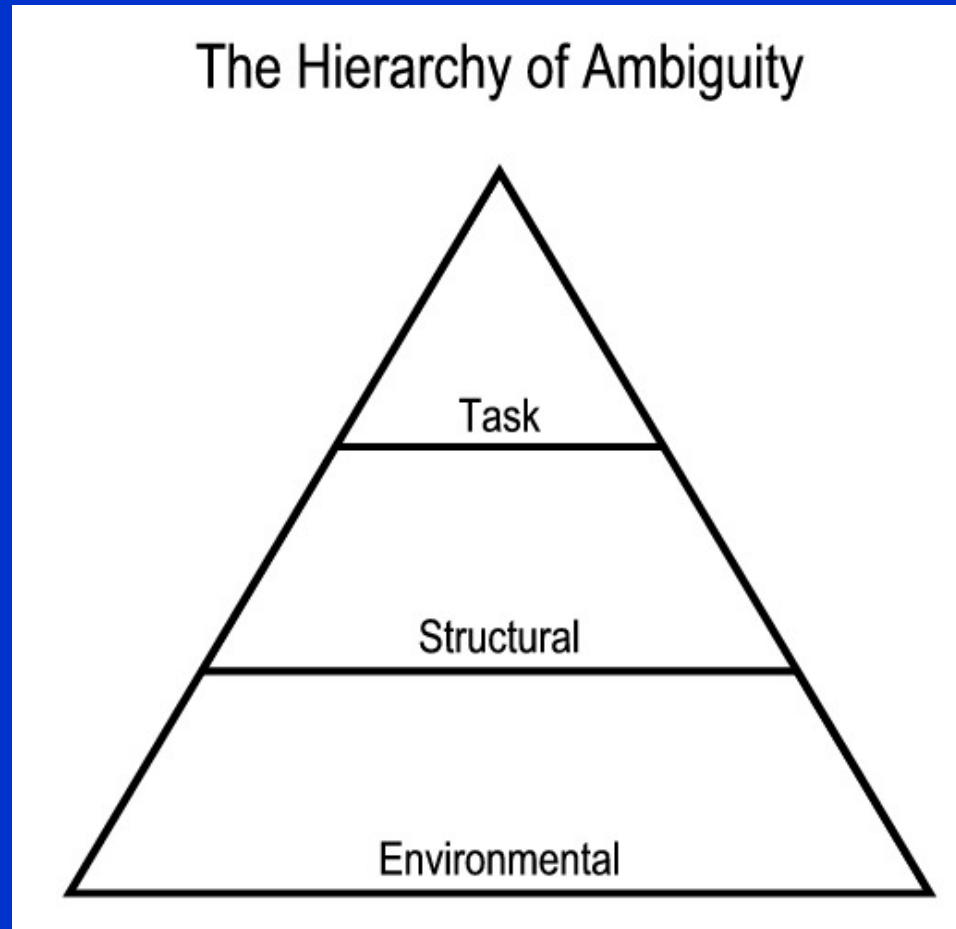
- Exclusion from Decision Making
- Inconsistency
- Excessive Monitoring
- Focus on Tasks not Goals
- Unqualified Evaluation
- Misaligned Extrinsic Motivators
- Artificial Deadlines
- Changing Deadlines
- Organizational Disinterest
- Teams Without Skills

Manage Ambiguity

Why Bother Managing Ambiguity?

Geekwork is Structured By Ambiguity

What You Don't Know Has a Structure



Environmental Ambiguity

Making Sense of the Environment

Structural Ambiguity

What Work Will Be Done?
How Will We Organize to Do It?

Task Ambiguity

What Roles Must Be Played?
Who Will Play Which Role?

Questions?

So What's Your Action Plan?

You Can Lead Geeks

Will You Try?

www.leadinggeeks.com

